

Leveraging the ‘Creative Class’ for Local Economic Development: Music Row in Nashville, Tennessee

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Abstract

Due to an expanding concern for economic development and social sustainability, many cities are directing their efforts towards place-making to improve neighborhoods, cities and regions. This paper seeks to become a tool designed to enhance “place” in Music Row in Nashville, TN. A literature review focused on the “creative class” and its influence on place-making will aid in the formation of strategies to be implemented within the physical fabric of the area. Furthermore, many local leaders are focusing on the role of urban design. The suggestion that urban design policies can make a positive contribution to the rejuvenation of a local broader economy is supported throughout this paper. This thesis argues that places, specifically “creative” places, are an important component of economic growth and Music Row can exemplify how improved urban design can be positively linked to local economic regeneration. Above all, the recommendations made in the paper seek to become strategies that may influence impact and enhance the creation of “place” in Music Row for the next decade.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 City of Nashville, TN

The image of Nashville, created and supported by country music stars from years ago, is quite different from the reality of Nashville today:

“In fact, this false perception has impeded the efforts of city government officials to attract new industries to Nashville. Fortunately, they have been able to overcome this obstacle and have led the city to remarkable growth and prosperity,” (Bond, 2004).

Nashville is Tennessee’s second largest city with a population growth of over 1.5 million. The city, home to the Grand Ole Opry, the Ryman Auditorium, and the Country Music Festival, has more than 100 different music venues and other attractions, deeming it a center of the country music industry and earning its nickname "Music City". In addition, General Motors, Amazon



Figure 1: Broadway Street, with its restaurants, shops and live music venues, reveals visitors why Nashville, Tennessee is the city for music lovers. Source: www.theatlanticcities.com

and Nissan are invested in Nashville as well as twelve Fortune 500 companies that maintain their headquarters within the city. Real estate professional Jan Harbor states, “Nashville is really on the ball. It was just voted as the No. 4 city in the country for job development by Gallup and buyers are taking note of the growth potential here,” (Cooper, 2012).

Nashville has also become a center for the health care, publishing, banking and transportation industries. Being recently named the 4th best city for college graduates by Forbes, the exceptional

educational climate of the city is exemplified by the almost two dozen colleges and universities, including Vanderbilt University and Belmont University. Several types of partnerships between these schools and the community have formed allowing for different individuals and organizations to play a leading role in the adaptive reuse of older urban facilities or the re-energizing of the downtown core and surrounding areas to become integrated work-live-learn environments.

1.2 Nashville's Music Row Origins:

Nashville's well-known Music Row is located less than one mile from the downtown core. The area began as a residential neighborhood with houses built from the 1920s to the 1940s. A later addition of a small commercial center on the northern end of Demonbreun Street was established. The original compact block structure and density of businesses made the area attractive to residents who valued accessibility but wanted to live outside of downtown. In the early 1950s, as the country music business boomed in Nashville, many recording studios and record labels began to move from downtown. RCA was the first to move, followed by music producer Owen Bradley's purchase of an old home which he converted into a recording studio (MHC, 1997). "In 1957 financier Dan Maddox built a new studio and



Figure 3: Map of the study area. Source: <https://maps.google.com>



Figure 2: RCA Studio B Source: <http://mbreiding.us>

office building on 17th Avenue, which he leased to RCA. That structure now survives as the famous Studio B,” (MHC, 1997). Over the next decade, Columbia Records, ABC Paramount and Capitol Records moved to the area with some inhabiting older structures and other companies building large new office spaces. In 1967 the Country Music Hall of Fame opened on Demonbreun Street making its commercial center the focus of entertainment related souvenir shops, music museums and restaurants. By 1970 Music Row was the most geographically concentrated entertainment business district in the country (MHC, 1997).

Urban renewal came to Music Row when the city bought a six-lane thoroughfare that would connect Hillsboro Pike to Demonbreun Street and on to West End Avenue. In her book, *The Plan of Nashville: Avenues to a Great City*, Christine Kreyling describes how the new corridor, lined with high-rise towers, gave the music industry a “prominent address and physical presence” (Kreyling, 2005). During this period, the city either compromised or removed much of the remaining residential fabric in the area. As a result, 16th and 17th Avenues were turned into one way, high speed corridors. While the block connectivity remained, the pedestrian environment was weakened by increased automobile traffic. Inattention grew over the pedestrian scale by many of the modifications of the grand new office buildings. “With over 150,000 sq. ft. of office space constructed during the first half of the 1990s alone, it became clear that Music Row is outgrowing its historic boundaries,” (MHC, 1997).

In the mid 1990s, creating large uncertainty about the future of Music Row, The Country Music Hall of Fame announced it would relocate to downtown. With the impending closure, the Country Music



Figure 4: Map of Designated Area for The Music Row Planning and Design Study Source: www.nashville.gov

Hall of Fame and the commercial area anchoring Music Row would lose its essential tourist attraction and activity generator. Recognizing that new challenges would lie ahead, the Metro Government commissioned *The Music Row Planning and Design Study* in 1997 to address the changing character of the area and its future context within the larger city. The design study stated,

“The Music Row Plan is premised upon the belief that the study area, in accordance with current and future market trends, will increasingly shift its focus away from tourism and towards an expanded office market,” (MHC, 1997).

Therefore, the plan sought economic and design strategies intended to enhance the area commercially and reposition it within the current local real estate market.

In 2001, the Nashville Metro Council passed an ordinance, the Urban Design Overlay (UDO), to be the zoning tool which would regulate the physical form of development in the designated Music Row area. The UDO seeks to protect existing character while ensuring comprehensive development (Metro Planning Commission, 2008). Additionally, it states:

“In particular, the implementation of these guidelines will ensure that rehabilitations, redevelopment, and new construction in the district will contribute to an emerging urban form that will provide a new focal point for the city and benefit area property owners, businesses, residents, and other stakeholders,” (Metro Planning Commission, 2001).

Typically, plans such as the UDO generate a great deal of initial enthusiasm and community support. Eleven years following its implementation, however, the community is able to see a growing contradiction between the original UDO’s goals and the current trajectory of growth and development in the area. As years have passed the creation of the UDO has translated into some concrete changes; yet, the city continues to evolve and the plans for such an area should continue to support the growing and developing needs of changing demographics for its future sustainability and prosperity.

2.0 Rationale for the Study

This section provides background information on the significance of the Music Row area for Nashville in order to explain the public support for a new direction for development in the area.

2.1 Rationale 1- Economic Benefits:

Research reveals that American cities, such as Nashville TN, inextricably tie creativity to the urban environment and local economy. Richard Florida states,

“Nashville is the Silicon Valley of the music industry – a concentrated cluster of musical talent, venues, studios and all the inputs required to make music. So it’s no surprise the city take the music business seriously,” (Florida, 2010).

Nashville’s Music Row, as a combination of global corporations and independent artists, songwriters, and musicians supports the local businesses and economic development of Nashville. In 2006, in collaboration with The Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce, as part of its effort to create stronger working relationships between the music industry and the Nashville business community, Dr. Patrick Raines and Dr. LaTanya Brown conducted an economic impact study to assess the impact of the music industry within the Nashville community. The researchers captured Nashville’s music-related employment, sales and tax data, establishments and revenues by analyzing the city’s business patterns and statistics. Raines and Brown also utilized surveys, distributed to 325 music industry leaders, which requested information on each firm’s annual sales, employment, expenses and taxes. Estimates of tour income flowing into the Nashville MSA and merchandise sales were also estimated for the study. Next, regional economic multipliers (REMI), defined and based upon the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), were applied to the direct values to determine the secondary impacts (“ripple effects”) on employment and economic output for the region.

The economic results of this study estimates that the music industry creates 19,437 jobs directly related to music production and those jobs provide \$722 million dollars in labor income annually. When music industry employees spend their income, additional jobs are indirectly created within the Nashville MSA, thus creating a “ripple effect.” This “ripple effect” is estimated to be an additional 19,826 employees. Music-related tourism supports an additional 14,995 employees in the area economy and the direct spending by music industry firms in Nashville was estimated at \$2.64 billion.

“When the impact of music-related tourism is added to the direct and secondary impact of music industry spending, the total impact of the music industry in the Nashville MSA is \$6.38 billion.

Thus, the economic impact of the music industry in the Nashville MSA almost exceeds the cumulative impact of the music industries in Georgia, Seattle WA, Austin TX, and Memphis TN,” (Brown and Raines, 2006).

Furthermore, the fiscal impact of sales, property and accommodation tax revenues is important for state and local governments as a “total of more than \$75 million in tax revenues is estimated to have been generated by the music industry,” (Brown and Raines, 2006). Specifically, the report demonstrates the economic value that the music industry generates for the middle Tennessee economy. This study can help policymakers, citizens, business people, developers and entertainers see the economic development value of the music industry, rather than merely assuming the entertainment value of the industry. Partnerships and cooperation between the music industry and the planning community could leverage and capitalize on the economic strength of the industry reaping benefits for the city beyond the cultural impact of being the “Music City.”

2.2 Rationale 2- Technological Shifts:

There have been substantial technological changes on the surfaces of Nashville’s music industry, many of which have affected the people and institutions. The author of *The Nashville Music Machine: The Unwritten Rules of the Country Music Business*, Dan Daley states,

“A combination of more accessibility to more kinds of music and the continued influx of people to Nashville who are not coming to participate in country music are forming the basis for parallel universes to develop there,” (Daley, 1998).

Technology, demographic shifts, and also fracturing musical culture in America, Daley believes have had an impact on the way Nashville runs its music business, and by extension, on the music itself. The engine of technology has had a huge impact on the process of decentralizing the larger music industry as well. The internet has become the new distribution mechanism; however, more significantly, this shift in technology has led to a changed perspective and philosophies of the business. In Nashville, like so many other cities, with a highly-mobile population, the connections that once held communities and professionals together have loosened, and have been weakening with each successive year and each new technological advance. Already having significant effects are the production technologies that permit recordings to be manufactured in multiple locations outside the traditional facilities and historical structure of the music industry, thereby reducing the need for face-to-face interaction. The question is thus posed for planners: how can the location, culture and infrastructure of Music Row withstand the changes that technology is forcing on Nashville’s country music industry? Daley suggests it is not certain that those changes will threaten the entire existence or continuation of the country music business there and believes the deep roots and lingering tradition surrounding Nashville’s country music industry will maintain those bonds. Daley states,

“..the fact that Nashville has survived both the social trend and processes of decentralizing the larger music industry can be taken as a hopeful sign of its ability to continue to do so in the future,” (Daley, 1998).

Signaling the importance of the industry to the larger community, the Music Business Council was launched in 2009. The mayor sits on the council whose members not only include label executives and entertainment lawyers, but also musicians like Emmylou Harris and Jack White. The Council’s

initiatives extend all the way from supporting and expanding the presence of music festivals in Nashville to developing the best music education program of any public school system in the world. Although significant, this kind of support of Nashville's country music business cannot replace the greater need to create better physical places where it can be nurtured, cultivated and celebrated. Daley states,

“But precisely because social changes due to the explosion in technology, communications and media have created an accelerated centrifugal effect on the cultural underpinnings of societies, country music's ability to maintain its sense of self-for its makers and its listeners-requires some kind of physical sanctuary, a tangible reference point by which it positions itself, and as a benchmark against which anything espousing to be country can be measured against,” (Daley, 1998).

Technology is indeed a function of both urbanization and economic development. Much of Richard Florida's thesis involves the emergence of the information age, the increase in the number of knowledge workers, and the growth of technology clusters. He believes internet connectivity is closely associated with the level of human capital and with the percentage of the workforce that are members of the creative class. His research includes examples of cities that lead him to conclude that “internet access is clearly a function of economic development” and “demand for electronics and online services grows as living standards rise along with disposable income levels,” (Florida, 2010). He views access to technology as closely associated with the level of innovation and entrepreneurship, but can also extend to other facets of life today, from overall happiness and social well-being.

This synergy of forces affecting the country music industry has cast a new kind of light on the properties of the Music Row area. Daley describes their future as either “as a fortress manned by defenders of the True Faith” or as a “quaint but dated collection of storefronts whose glass-and-chrome atria will mean little as the business moves in the form of data streams from the homes of musicians, producers and publishers over a fiber optic network,” (Daley, 1998). Ultimately, any efforts need not

undermine any of the technological changes that have impacted the organization of the music business, but rather, efforts should embrace the technology and its potential to serve the redevelopment of the area.

2.3 Rationale 3- Clustering Effect:

Embraced by several business communities, Harvard Business School Professor Michael Porter popularized the cluster-based theory of economic growth. Porter suggested that innovation is derived from specialization and dense networks of interrelated firms and workers. In their research paper, “Benchmarking the Creative Class in Arlington, VA”, Terry Holzheimer and Lauren Hodgin write,

“Economists suggest that agglomeration economies, essentially efficiencies and comparative advantage, occur when firms cluster in geographic space. Clusters build on their increasing specialization and rapid and constant innovation to increase their global competitiveness,” (Holzheimer and Hodgin, 2005).

Richard Florida adds to these notions believing that the new information economy is strongly correlated with labor force clusters or trending characteristics shared among local populations. For example, Florida views that the higher the proportion of the population in the “super creative core” occupations such as scientists, artists, designers, architects, engineers, or writers signifies a deeper source of innovation and creativity, thus, a stronger local economy. Other individual measures he uses as a reflection of strong economic development is a greater proportion of the population aged 25–34 (or “Generation Y”) or the adult population with a bachelor’s degree or higher level of education. Additionally, Florida describes the clustering of a foreign born population to reflect increased sources of innovation and economic development. Each characteristic serves to represent the diverse, mobile, and heart of the creative class.

Interestingly, the city of Nashville possesses many of the characteristics described by Florida. Rick Bernhardt, director of the Nashville Metropolitan Planning Department discusses the future composition of Nashville:

“By the year 2035, the population of Nashville region will grow by one million persons. By 2020, the majority of people in Davidson County will be people of color. By 2040, Latinos will be the

largest ethnic group in Nashville – not by immigration, but by natural growth. Instead of the historical age population bell curve, the next 25 years will require that we address a population barbell. Aging boomers and maturing Gen-Y’s will be the largest age segments, two groups with very different needs, outlooks, and history,” (Berhardt, 2012).

This type of projected growth within the city’s core over the next decade signifies the potential advantages that Nashville could gain with new investments, particularly along Music Row. *Nashville Post* writer, J.R. Lind states:

“With the Music City Center largely stifling downtown commercial development south of Broadway — at least for the time being — and the river hemming in the business district in the other directions, the only place for downtown to stretch its legs is toward Music Row,” (Lind, 2011).

In an effort to curb suburban growth, invigorate economic markets within the city, and regenerate a “sense of place,” there needs to be a renewed interest in the area. Berhardt states, “We are headed for change, whether we want it or not – our challenge is to manage that change appropriately,” (Berhardt, 2012). These various rationales included seek to necessitate a shift in thinking of how to use the physical urban space along Music Row.

3.0 Goals and Objectives

In the creative economy, regional advantage comes to places that can quickly mobilize their talent, resources, and capabilities. Leading regions can almost instantaneously bring together the assets required to launch new businesses and turn innovations into successful businesses and products. For these reasons, the nexus of competitive advantage shifts to those regions that can generate, retain, and attract the creative class. The goal of this paper is to develop recommendations for the physical components of Music Row that, if implemented could help this “place” become attractive to the creative class and others.

Place-making approaches to the planning and design of this space should capitalize on its existing assets as well as develop new visions for the community.

The overall objective of this paper is to reassess the role of the Urban Design Overlay played in the current conditions of Music Row. In turn, it seeks to offer new guidance for local planning agencies, property owners, developers, architects, business owners, public officials, and other interested citizens when considering rehabilitation, redevelopment or new construction in the Music Row. Ultimately, the purpose of offering planning recommendations is to enhance Music Row competitiveness and help it provide residents, area employees and visitors with a variety of residential, commercial and entertainment options that are not only convenient, but are unlike what they will find anywhere else in the region.

4.0 Literature Review

Extensive literature relates creativity and regional economic development in several cities throughout the world. Music Row is well known for all the established and emerging songwriters, performers, producers and other artists that have all had roots planted there. It is their originality, work ethic and creativity that have driven its enduring scene of local talent. To further identify the significant role that ‘creativity’ has in cities, it is important to examine the many definitions, concepts and influences of which exist in examples of this literature.

3.1 Qualitative Analysis:

In her books *Life and Death of Great American Cities* and *The Economy of Cities*, Jane Jacobs was among the first individuals to acknowledge the existence of a “creative class.” In 1961, Jacobs wrote her personal account of the principles of healthy communities and diverse urban development to illustrate why certain places work, and what can be done to improve those that do not. Jacobs observed how the elements of a city – sidewalks, parks, neighborhoods, government, economy – function together synergistically, in the same manner as the natural ecosystem. She approached cities as “living beings”

and suggested that over time, buildings, streets and neighborhoods function as dynamic organisms, changing in response to how people interact with them. According to her argument, cities depend on a diversity of buildings, residences, businesses and other non-residential uses, as well as people of different ages using areas at different times of day, to create community vitality. In 1970, Jacobs further tackled the subject of diversity in her book *The Economy of Cities*. She viewed cities as the main engines of the economy and the intermingling of city uses and users as crucial to economic and urban development. She contested the assumptions that cities are a product of agricultural advancement or that specialized, highly efficient economies fuel long-term growth and that large, stable businesses are the best sources of innovation. Instead, she developed a model of local economic development based on adding new types of work to old, promoting small businesses, and supporting the creative impulses of urban entrepreneurs. By dissecting how cities and their economies emerge and grow, Jacobs casts new light on the nature of local economies.

Other researchers have focused on different elements, or components, as they attempt to define the “creative class.” In their book, *Creativity and the City: How the Creative Economy Changes the City*, Simon Frank and Evert Verhagen provide background and content to the discussion of the creative city. The authors describe the city as “the most important organizing factor of our time,” (Frank and Verhagen, 2005). The authors offer alternate working definitions of “creativity” in an attempt to clarify the relationship between the concepts of creativity and the numerous sectors of an economy. They note the difference between the creative economy, in which numerous people work in different sectors, and the creative industry, one particular sector consisting mainly of the arts, design and the media. This book seeks to show how ‘creativity’ plays a role in society, and in the interaction between different private organizations and between public government and its citizens. The authors cite Hungarian-US psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi:

“‘creativity brings about something that is genuinely new and worthwhile enough to be added to culture [...] but if an idea is to have any effect, it has to be packaged in a language that others can

understand, it has to be accepted by the experts in that field, and finally it has to be incorporated in the cultural area to which it belongs,” (Frank and Verhagen, 2005).

One common finding is that the local government has an important and dynamic role to play in supporting creative cities and cultural clusters. This interest has been inspired by academic agendas that variously stress the importance of cultural industries, innovation, experience, creativity and creative workers to regional development as well as by policy-makers’ continuing concern to find substitutes for jobs disappearing through the industrial and spatial restructuring of manufacturing and services. “The physical entity of the city also makes it possible to pinpoint all kinds of social and economic developments and to explain how policy can influence them,” (Frank and Verhagen, 2005). Indeed policy-makers throughout the international cities have become actively engaged in recasting cultural and creative activities as drivers of entrepreneurship and local economic development. Above all, the authors suggest this growth should draw attention to the early role of public investment in laying the groundwork for creativity and innovative products.

Authors Chris Gibson and Lily Kong also provide additional analysis of the creative city and the context of debates about the influence of the ‘cultural turn’ in local economic development in "Cultural Economy: A Critical Review." Prompted by the growing recognition that ‘the economic is embedded in the cultural,’ the authors research how the term ‘cultural economy’ has been used in multiple ways and suggest that better acknowledgement is needed of its uses and implications for research and policy programs. For example, the authors examine how the ‘cultural economy’ is used relative to urban studies theorist Richard Florida’s ‘creative index’ approach. Florida’s ‘creative index’ computes indices such as a bohemian index, gay index and so forth in order to measure the impact of culture on urban and regional economies. The authors also discuss the effects of ‘clustering’ and local economic development. Links are drawn between clustering as a spatial trend and increased capacity for collaboration and innovation expanding on the idea that there are certain ‘spillovers’ between individuals and companies located proximately. The article states,

“...the overriding and repeatedly confirmed observation has been one of agglomeration and spatial concentration” and “creativity and innovation in the modern cultural economy can be understood as social phenomena rooted in the production system and its geographic milieu,” (Gibson and Kong, 2005).

Factors that contribute to increased agglomeration are associated with the rapid circulation of information, which ensures that there is a constant tendency to destabilization of prevailing patterns and practices, and a certain propensity for new insights of activities and production. Yet, the authors state,

“New communications technologies and media cannot replicate aspects of human interaction, particularly in the practices of learning, innovating, contracting, employment, as well as socializing, eating, relaxing though they have enabled new kinds of public-private networks to be intermittently assembled and disassembled,” (Gibson and Kong, 2005).

Finally, the authors acknowledge the need future directions for research on cultural economy as it relates to public and private life. The main assumption underlying this approach is that creative workers seek creative outlets beyond their work lives and therefore migrate to cities that actively support their preferred lifestyle needs and desires.

Richard Florida acknowledges his indebtedness to Jane Jacobs and others for their early insights into the “creative class.” In his book *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Florida argues that cities that can attract and maintain creative doers and thinkers fare better economically. He does not impose strict limits on the scope of the “creative class” and economy, arguing that the term ‘creativity’ not only involves art, design and architecture, but that it is an added value for every “product.” Florida seeks to quantify the growth of the ‘creative class’ stating, “In the US, the creative class makes up 30% of the workforce-and generates an astounding 47% of all wages and salaries,” (Florida, 2002). Florida asserts that the “creative class” also includes those people whose activities in the creative economy give them an enormous freedom and the empowerment to choose for themselves where they want to live and work. Florida views the successful city as a place that is open to a gay community, to artists, to musicians, to immigrants and allows human beings to harness and mobilize resources creatively. Characterized by tolerance of diversity

for which freedom to develop as one chooses, is essential for creative societies according to Florida. “Technology” and “talent”, in addition to “tolerance,” round out Florida’s causal theory of the “creative class” and positive economic development. Florida offers Silicon Valley as an example of ‘creative cities’ noting that nearly one-third of all the high-tech companies started in Silicon Valley during the 1990s were founded by a Chinese or Indian person, and 50 percent of computer scientists come from outside the United States. The central argument of Florida in his book is that every single human being has creative potential. The real key is to tap into the knowledge and capability and the creativity of every person to bring everyone into the creative age.

In his book, *The Flight of the Creative Class*, Florida explains how the same conditions that affect local economic development and the harnessing of human creativity play out globally on a case-by-case basis offering examples of how cities around the world have met the demands of the creative class. He theorizes that place and geography has become the central organizing unit of recent times and concludes that this has replaced the industrial corporation as the central organizing unit. Florida states,

“In the end, the job versus people question is a false dichotomy. The two come together at the nexus of place. Real places provide the thick labor markets that match people to the jobs, the mating market that enable people to find life partners, the social markets that beget friendships, the amenities that allow people to pursue the lifestyles they wish, and the smorgasbord of daily choices that encourage people to construct and validate their identities holistically,” (Florida, 2006).

Furthermore, Florida argues that the United States has become less supportive of individuals who develop new processes, businesses, technologies, and art. Florida frames the broad challenges that the United States faces including the outsourcing of ingenuity, rising intolerance and inequality, a faltering education system and disconnected political governance. The end result is that the United States attracts fewer foreign graduate students, academics, and entrepreneurs. According to Florida, these challenges all point to the “creativity crisis” that is causing the decline of American economic power and competitiveness.

Finally, Florida discusses how regions and nations around the world are adapting to the global creative economy. He offers insight to business, political, and cultural leaders for solutions to address issues of equality, attracting creative talent and sustaining economic growth.

Several people have offered differing points of view on some of Florida's hypothesis regarding the creative city. Harvard economist Edward Glaeser criticized Florida in his assumption that the key factor in determining whether a city is successful is how significant a cohort of the 'creative class' it attracts. In other words, Glaeser critiques the notion of a causal process linking the 'creative class' and economic growth. In his book, "The Rise of the Skilled City", Glaeser argues "that human capital predicts urban success because "high skilled people in high skilled industries may come up with more new ideas," (Glaeser, 2003). Human capital is the set of skills which an employee acquires on the job, through training and experience, and which increase that employee's value in the marketplace.

Unconvinced that there is an effect of bohemian, creative types, over and above the effect of human capital, Glaeser test the theory by running regression analyses. One regression included both percent of adults with a college education and the share of employees considered to be in Florida's creative core. The results show "a solid, positive statistically significant impact of the schooling variable and a negative, statistically insignificant impact of the super creative core," (Glaeser, 2003). This statistical evidence shows that there is a stronger relationship between the level of education of labor and the degree of economic growth than Florida's argument of the level of diversity or Bohemianism and the rate of economic growth. "Glaeser concludes that human capital endowments basically explain US urban population growth in the 1990s, with little or no evidence of an independent 'Bohemian effect', (Peck, 2005). On this basis, Glaeser concludes the relationship between the cultural economy and the city, and growth, is misplaced.

Another example of a critical, conservative critique of Florida's thesis is offered by Steven Malanga in his 2004 article "The Curse of the Creative Class." Malanga argues that the best performing

cities on measures like employment and population growth, or the rate of formation of high-growth companies, are not creative capitals like San Francisco or New York, but low-tax, business-friendly cities like Las Vegas and Memphis. Malanga seeks to demonstrate that weak correlations between economic development and expressed cultural traits may be no more than conditional, or easily challenged by counterfactual cases. Author Jamie Peck in his article “Struggling with the Creative Class”, discusses Malanga’s research results:

“Demonstrating, if nothing else, the ease with which urban league tables can be manipulated, Malanga mischievously suggests that Florida constructed his measures in such a way as to elevate a predetermined set of favored liberal-leaning cities, linked to the 1990s technology boom. In a classic circular fashion, certain conspicuous features of these cities are then ascribed causal significance as foundations of economic creativity,” (Peck, 2005).

Above all, Malanga asserts that street-level cultural innovation and conspicuous consumption may just as easily be consequences of economic growth, rather than causes of it. He states,

“You can draw in Mr. Florida’s creative-class capitalists — ponytails, jeans, rock music and all — by liberal, big-government means: diversity celebrations, ‘progressive’ social legislation and government spending on cultural amenities. Put another way, Mr. Florida’s ideas are breathing new life into an old argument: that taxes, incentives and business-friendly policies are less important in attracting jobs than social legislation and government-provided amenities . . . Not only does he believe that marginal attractions like an idiosyncratic arts scene can build economic power, but he thinks that government officials and policy makers like himself can figure out how to produce those things artificially . . . Concerned with inessentials, cities under Mr. Florida’s thrall can easily overlook what residents really want,” (Malanga, 2004).

Authors Chris Gibson and Lily Kong, mentioned earlier, suggest to distinguish the ‘creative class’ as a discrete segment of society, employed in the creative industries, “misses the complexity of

cultural activity, and reduces contradictions and interpretations to a numerical scale,” (Gibson and Kong, 2005). They view theories such as Florida’s has been to make overt generalizations about the cultural economy, as a transformative component of total economic activities in places. “Culture becomes an important consideration, but only in so far as it pertains to particular kinds of productive activities or specified space economies,” (Gibson and Kong, 2005). Similarly, the authors suggest only selective interpretations of ‘innovation’ and ‘creativity’ are adopted and only generally discussed where it is possible for it to be harnessed in productive ways for economic growth. Other forms of ‘creativity’ that do not automatically contribute to economic development gain scarce recognition. This involves certain risks where discourses of ‘creativity’ in the cultural economy themselves become normative, “such that only certain types of ‘creativity’ are promoted and tolerated in society while others such as skills in graffiti-art are rendered unproductive and abject (unless of course, they too can be commodified),” (Gibson and Kong, 2005). Ultimately, Gibson and Kong believe the cultural economy, like ‘the economy’ as a whole, is about far more than mere “mechanics” the question is not whether to rediscover economics or to go with the cultural, it is how to do both at the same time in ways that recognize the significance of these intersections.

In “Creative Cities: The Cultural Industries and the Creative Class”, Andy Pratt suggests the reasons for the popularity of Florida’s methodology for ranking cities in terms of ‘creativity’ is that it makes people feel “cool.” He states,

“Those peddling culture or creativity follow a long line of previous potions: environment, safety, livability, hi-tech, bio-, or nano- industry. To be clear, it is not the moniker that matters for the exercise but what it is suggestive of: growth,” (Pratt, 2008).

To that end, Pratt argues that the existing line of thought has prioritized consumption and idealized culture. He states, “In so doing researchers and policy makers have overlooked, and discounted, the significance of the growth in importance to economies, and society more generally, of cultural production,” (Pratt, 2008). Pratt stresses policy focused on solely consumption, “...brings with it inherent contradictions of capital versus revenue funding (where buildings are paid for, but not the activities to

populate them), prestige versus ‘ordinary’ culture, infrastructure versus networks and training, and one off versus strategic development,” (Pratt, 2008). Furthermore, Pratt discusses that the cultural industries and the arts can play a significant role in addressing issues of social exclusion and community support; however, this does not always produce lots of money. He believes certain urban cultural policies may produce ‘ersatz’ and elitist outcomes in the remaking of a city’s cultural identity which may disenfranchise local communities, particularly suburban and deprived populations and that a city planned for cultural consumption is not a culture capital if it simply functions as an ‘entrepot of the arts’, buying and selling without producing the arts itself. Just as at the dawn of the Industrial Revolution in the United States, the rise of the creative economy could pose the risk of creating an economic divide between the creative haves and the creative have-nots or a much more class-divided and economically unequal society.

Pratt believes it is a little naive, to see as Florida does, an autonomous creative consumer as an agent of change and that it is worth noting that a pattern observed in cities for many years now is a particular form of ‘cultural gentrification.’ He states,

“Here artists colonize cheap and dilapidated property, in time those seeking a ‘boho culture’ move in so as to be close to the artists. Of course, the key point for cultural entrepreneurs and artists is that as the art galleries and rich loft owners move in the artists are forced out due to rising prices. This provides us with a strong empirical message as to how consumption based re-generation is corrosive to production based versions. Some policy makers consider that it may be a price worth paying for growth; however, it is certainly not a good way to promote the cultural industries or the creativity so often valued in them,” (Pratt, 2008).

Above all Pratt argues that the real challenge is to find an accommodation between production and consumption, rather than seeing them as opposites but rather as part of the same process.

Jamie Peck, in his 2005 article “Struggling with the Creative Class”, suggests Florida’s creativity credo holds, rather evasively, that *everyone* is — at least potentially — creative, that ‘[t]apping and

stoking the creative furnace inside every human being is the great challenge of our time' (Florida, 2005).

He states,

“If only a way could be found, Florida muses, to pull the two-thirds of society currently stranded in ‘deadening’ jobs within the working and service classes into the creative economy, then all might share the fruits of the creative Eden. This, in effect, is a curious form of class analysis, in which there are no meaningfully enduring class *divisions*. Leaving unanswered, then, the nagging question of who will launder the shirts in this creative paradise,” (Peck, 2005)

While some members of this majority underclass appear in Florida’s account — usually waiting tables or cutting hair — most are absent. Ultimately, however, Peck views Florida as

“having lauded the creative overclass for its achievements, having accounted for its privileged position as the consequence of intrinsic talent, and having made the case for increased public subsidy for this elite group, Florida’s own arguments reduce the uncreative two-thirds to an afterthought,” (Peck, 2005).

3.2 Quantitative Analysis:

Other studies offer a more quantitative analysis of the roles that culture and creativity seem to play in regions’ and cities’ economic lives. In *Creative cities, cultural clusters and local economic development*, Philip Cooke and Luciana Lazzeretti bring together several examples of contemporary cities that commonly address these issues of culture and the economy. In the chapter “Mapping and analyzing creative systems in Italy (1991-2001)”, author Frank Capone is primarily concerned with the issues of ‘knowledge, creative industries and local economic development’ in Italy. Capone uses statistical data to find where the creative industries are located, by which kind of creativity they are characterized, and how those creative industry concentrations affect the overall economy.

Capone employs local labor statistics in the period 1991-2001 to conduct his socio-economic analysis focusing on the intensity of relations between the residents and the workforce of a certain area.

He states using local labor statistics allow him “to go beyond the administrative definitions and refer more to the effective industrial organization of the territory,” (Cooke and Lazeretti, 2008). Capone represents the creative industries by different categories: software and computer services, research and development (architecture, graphic design, fashion), and telecommunications. Additional data variables include the number of employees in local units in the local area specialized in creative industries, the number of employees in local units, the number of employees in Italy specialized in creative industries, and the total employment in Italy. Capone applies location quotients to the data to single out those places that have a high concentration of ‘creative’ industries compared to the national average.

By using this approach Capone constructs a picture of the creative industries of various Italian localities. As hypothesized, Capone demonstrates the creative industries account for a significant portion of total employment in a locality. Analysis of the data revealed that the creative industries grew 46 percent, in comparison to the total occupation growth of 7.8 percent for the same period. In order to discover the contribution of the creative industries to local development, Capone uses correlation tables calculated on the basis of localization coefficients of the creative industries employees and the different variables in the Italian local labor statistics. “As expected there is a positive correlation between creative industries location quotients and employment growth in creative industries and in the overall employment,” (Cooke and Lazeretti, 2008). This supports the assertion that creative industries attract workers, particularly creative workers. Based on the results of his study, Capone states, “it is clearly manifest that culture has evident economic effects on the city and that its role is inextricably tied to the local economy as a whole,” (Cooke and Lazeretti, 2008).

Capone also conducts a study investigating whether creative systems are mostly characterized by traditional creative industries such as publishing, music, architecture and engineering and arts, or by non-traditional creative ones such as research and development in sciences, software and computer services or advertising. Capone identifies three typologies by analyzing the localization coefficients of the traditional and non-traditional creative industries based in the year 2001: (a) local labor systems specialized in

traditional cultural industries; (b) local labor systems specialized in non-traditional cultural industries (c) diversified systems (specialized in both sectors). Regarding the employment of the three groups in 2001,

“All the systems registered substantial growth in the period from 1991-2001 (90-95 percent), and what is quite remarkable is that the diversified systems grew in ten years by 266,200 employees, which represent almost the entire growth of the Italian creative economy, that is, 96 percent of the creative industries’ total growth,” (Cooke and Lazeretti, 2008).

The challenge between the two groups of traditional and non-traditional creative industries was dominated by the third group of diversified systems. “This highlights how the existence of local advantages seems based on ‘economies of diversity’ *a la* Jacobs, as already described long ago by that author,” (Cooke and Lazeretti, 2008).

In a 2008 article in the *Journal of the American Planning Association* titled “Which Indicators Explain Metropolitan Economic Performance Best? Traditional or Creative Class,” the authors use quantitative analysis to examine the relationships between the presence of Florida’s ‘creative class’ and regional economic performance, contrasting measures of regional creative capacity with traditional competitiveness factors. They state,

“By featuring the lifestyle preferences of the creative class, and especially its fondness for culturally diverse and tolerant urban landscapes, Florida’s ideas, indicated with measures of creativity or the creative class, are often contrasted with well-established ideas in economic development that emphasize investments in knowledge infrastructure and industrial diversification,” (Donegan, Drucker, Goldstein, Lowe, Malizia, 2008).

The authors use multivariate regression models to compare the influence a traditional set of variables (educational attainment, and shares of earnings from manufacturing, business services, and sole proprietorships) of economic competitiveness on metropolitan job growth, income growth, and job instability, educational attainment, total population size, industrial mix, and measures of entrepreneurship

with Florida's own indicators to predict economic strength. Data utilized included the percentage change in jobs, percentage change in per capita personal income, and the instability of jobs between 1994 and 2003. The authors were interested both in how well they would explain differences in regional economic outcomes and in their implications for designing policies to enhance regional economic competitiveness.

From the model results, the authors could compare the direct influence of Florida's "talent, tolerance, and technology" on subsequent metropolitan economic performance with traditional and creativity measures. The regression analysis models were designed to gauge the relative explanatory power (variation explained) and statistical significance of the creative class argument. The results show, "Measures of human capital and sector share usually outperform Florida's measures of talent, tolerance, and technology," (Donegan, Drucker, Goldstein, Lowe, Malizia, 2008). Results of the regression analysis do show that of the non-traditional measures, Florida's "melting pot" index has the greatest positive impact on job growth. Furthermore, none of the other creative class measures were important in the job growth model.

"The tech-pole measure is significant, but negative, indicating that metropolitan areas with smaller concentrations of economic activity in technology based sectors grew faster than those with higher concentrations of technology-based industries. Most interestingly, the proportion of regional workforces in creative class occupations (ranging from 14 to 41% for the metropolitan areas studied) had no significant effect on metropolitan job growth, although its sign is positive as expected," (Donegan, Drucker, Goldstein, Lowe, Malizia, 2008).

These results are inconsistent with the findings reported by Florida that regions with strong growth in the creative workforce have very strong growth in overall jobs.

Models predicting income change explain less variation than those predicting other economic performance measures. However, among the traditional factors, metropolitan areas with less manufacturing and higher shares of residents with education beyond high school in 1990 experienced significantly more per capita income growth from 1994 to 2003 but more earnings from sole proprietorships, a non-traditional measure, resulted in lower income growth. In terms of job growth,

among traditional measures, a higher share of earnings attributable to manufacturing increases job instability as expected in the period of manufacturing decline. The authors believe it less clear why a higher share of workers with college educations or a higher proportion of earnings from business services would increase job instability, though perhaps the rapid expansion of business services nationally has led to unstable job growth at the regional level. Among Florida's variables, higher values for the 'melting pot' index increases job stability, but the 'tech-pole, gay and creative class indexes' all result in greater job instability.

Although Florida's theories offer fresh insights about regional economies, the authors conclude their empirical analysis results offer no compelling evidence that attracting the creative class could be a substitute for traditional strategies such as investing in quality education, upgrading the skills of the workforce, creating new businesses, or expanding existing industries. They find measures derived from Florida's creative class hypotheses to be no more associated with positive economic outcomes than traditional competitiveness measures. Therefore, the authors do not advocate replacing traditional economic development strategies with those based primarily on attracting the creative class. They believe programs supporting education, business creation, and industrial diversity is more likely to be effective tools for promoting economic well-being.

5.0 Strategies for Local Policy and Planning: Case Studies

In *Making Strategies in Spatial Planning: Knowledge and Values*, Maria Cerreta and Grazia Concilio (2010) address a range of conditions that have to be met before a 'creative' city can thrive. The authors recognize the need for governments to adopt a more entrepreneurial style of planning in order to enhance cities' competitiveness, as well as a growing awareness that a number of planning concepts (compact cities, livable cities, creative cities, multi-cultural cities, fair cities) cannot be achieved solely through hard physical planning. They recommend processes that shape the environment- "a dynamic, integrated and indicative long-term vision, a plan for short-term and long-term actions, as well as a budget and a strategy for implementation," (Cerreta and Concilio, 2010). Furthermore, they warn a mere top-

down approach risks overlooking the local and historically evolved knowledge and unique character, while a one-dimensional emphasis of a bottom-up approach tends to deny or underestimate the importance of “linking micro-distinctiveness to larger structural issues and policies.” (Cerreta and Concilio, 2010). They state,

“Moreover, in addition to the traditional land use regulations, urban maintenance, production and management of services, governments are being called upon to respond to new demands, which imply the abandonment of bureaucratic approaches and the involvement of skills and resources that are external to the traditional administrative apparatus,” (Cerreta and Concilio, 2010).

The goals formed with the 2001 UDO clearly indicate the desire to protect and enhance the character and economic vitality that has been eroded over time. However, the implementation of the vision of the UDO has left much to be desired. There is a renewed effort to enlist some of the remaining pools of untapped resources or the formation of new ideas and programmatic goals to enable the script of urban competition to be performed and carried out effectively in Music Row into the future.

Cities emerge in Richard Florida’s account of the “creative class”, as settings for the most significant social processes and as the sites of new cultural and economic expansions. This section looks at what and how other cities established “creative” places as it becomes important to look at case studies as good sources of opportunities for innovation, examples of behavioral changes as well as challenges to theoretical assumptions. In “Struggling with the Creative Class”, Jamie Peck writes,

“‘Be creative — or die’ is how *Salon* writer Christopher Dreher summarized the new urban imperative: ‘cities must attract the new “creative class” with hip neighborhoods, an arts scene and a gay-friendly atmosphere — or they’ll go the way of Detroit’”, (Peck, 2005).

Peck also writes,

“While the new business knowledges of the 1990s helped *make* new kinds of managers, establishing novel ways of ordering, reading and acting in the world, and establishing a ‘kind of

grammar of business imperatives' (Thrift, 2001: 416), the creative-cities script has found, constituted and enrolled a widened civic audience for projects of new age urban revitalization," (Peck, 2005).

The new approach to economic development is exemplified by Florida's account of cities that strategically use technology, the music scene or other resources to reflect a place that is open to new people, ideas and creativity. Florida's tone is direct when he writes in *The Rise of the Creative Class*, "And it is for this reason that frequently I like to tell city leaders that finding ways to help support a local music scene can be just as important as investing in high-tech business and far more effective than building a downtown mall' (Florida, 2002).

Now cities such as Singapore, London, Memphis and Austin have paid attention to the Florida's creeds of creativity and are learning how to attract and nurture creative workers. "Civic leaders are seizing on the argument that they need to compete not with the plain old tax breaks and redevelopment schemes," (Peck, 2005). In this respect, cities are mobilizing following the creative cities script and it call for new action.

5.1 Tampa Bay, Florida:

The area of Tampa Bay was ranked almost bottom of 50 metro regions in terms of its attractiveness to the 'young and restless' population of 25–34 year-olds (Impresa and Coletta & Company, 2004). *Creative Tampa Bay* was established in the wake of Richard Florida's visit to the city in the Spring of 2003 and widely emulates strategies boasted in the Memphis Manifesto such as 'creativity resides in everyone, everywhere', and that 'building a community of ideas means empowering all people with the ability to express and use the genius of their own creativity.' The formation of *Creative TampaBay*, which hosted the first creative cities 'summit' in September, 2004, represents a response to this newly appreciated strategic deficit of young, innovative and creative talent.

"While describing itself as a 'grassroots organization', Creative TampaBay also has the backing of a number of local institutions, including Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, Tampa Bay Partnership, the Pinellas and Hillsborough Arts Councils, Tampa Downtown Partnership, Tampa Bay Technology Forum, and the Florida High Tech Corridor. The region's civic leaders have

begun to focus on the question of how to reproduce a ‘San Francisco or Austin or Boston or Florida’s gulf coast [albeit] with a uniquely Tampa Bay flavor’ (Trigaux, 2003: 1E), (Peck, 2005).

Above all, Creative TampaBay focuses its energies on events, social activities and information-sharing, including ‘regular discussion salons and cultural encounters’. Author Jamie Peck describes strategies of Creative TampaBay:

“This will be ‘a decisive force in shaping the economic destiny of Tampa Bay [because as] cities move increasingly into a knowledge-based economy, the kind of talented people each attracts will determine whether it wins or loses in the campaign for future prosperity’,” (Peck, 2005).

5.2 Baltimore, MD:

In the case of recent prolonged budget crisis, the leadership of Baltimore, MD has found some additional funding for a creativity strategy. Baltimore’s Mayor has formed a plan that involves the creative re-tasking of a long list of existing programs complemented with a rather shorter set of new ideas. Some of these ideas include additions to the mandatory bike paths, extending liquor licensing hours to 4am, the promotion of events that are unique to Baltimore, including the American Dime Museum, John Waters and Edgar Allan Poe, and the Night of 100 Elvises, converting unused industrial buildings to art studios and live-work spaces, developing ‘stick around stipends’ for creatively inclined college students, initiating a duckpin bowling tournament, in which the Mayor’s team would take on challengers from the business and cultural communities and placing chess tables outside City Hall.

Peck states,

“Creativity strategies, even as they have promptly become clichés in their own right, are in many ways tragically appropriate for late-entrepreneurial cities like Baltimore, the cities that have already tried practically everything, including, of course, building stadiums and offering corporate inducements. Today, hopes are pinned on ‘an increasingly standardized narrative of creativity-led urban economic development,’” (Peck, 2005).

5.3 Michigan-Cool Cities Initiative:

The Cool Cities Initiative was established to give cities access to existing state grant funds, loans, tax credits, or services that can help create vibrant, mixed-use neighborhoods to retain and attract the jobs and people critical to the emerging economies of the 21st century. Eligible activities within the Cool Cities program include rehabilitation or new construction of buildings (specifically, theaters, galleries, mixed-use housing), physical infrastructure development, farmers' markets, streetscaping and public art, façade improvements, outdoor recreation facilities, greenspace, parks, pavilions and demolition ('where viable historic resources are not damaged'). The program is funded by redirecting existing resources in state government however, "spending on ephemeral items — like festivals, cultural events, or consultancy — is, however, expressly prohibited. Even though the creative-cities thesis rests precariously on a series of elusive 'intangibles — excitement, attitude, open-mindedness, buzz' (Gertner, 2004: 88), its translation into urban-development practice, in states like Michigan, entails both literal and metaphorical forms of concretization," (Peck, 2005). A series of \$100,000 'catalyst' grants was awarded to cities that established a Local Cool Cities Advisory Group, to be spent along with funds from the state's 'Resource Toolbox' (a package of 113 preexisting funding measures re-tasked around cool-cities goals).

"A more concrete sense of what it takes to meet the criterion of 'neighborhoods with potential' is provided by the following indicative list of characteristics, the specification of which implies the targeting of public resources not to socio-economic need, but creative *potential*: mixed-income housing opportunities; pedestrian-friendly environment; commercial retail (basic goods and services, as well as entertainment venues); championing neighborhood/organizing mechanisms; higher density; clean/cared for public and private space; food venue options (restaurants, grocery stores, etc.); historic districts; recreation opportunities/parks; arts — galleries, shops, venues; accessibility," (Peck, 2005).

Regardless of their size and regional settings, there is a common theme among these cities: place-making is a priority. Each of these cities have invested in, mobilized and reorganized the sites and scales of their urban competition — around creative individuals and their favored neighborhood habitats.

6.0 Implications and Key Challenges for Nashville’s Music Row

6.1 Implications

What does this all mean for the city of Nashville, TN? How can the city of Nashville nurture the development of Music Row to help grow and diversify the larger local and regional economy? What, in other words, can Nashville do to increasingly attract the creative class and what structures and networks require attention to sustain and profit from local presence of the “creative class”? This by no means is an easy task. Determining what the “creative class” wants means adopting a different analytical mindset, and learning that, above all, they need space to ‘actualize their identities’ (Florida, 2002). Florida describes today’s era as a “new kind of capitalism based on human creativity” since “cities now find themselves in a high-stakes ‘war for talent’, one that can only be won by developing the kind of ‘people climates’ valued by creatives — urban environments that are open, diverse, dynamic and cool,” (Florida, 2003). Florida views the “creatives” as “not simply motivated by material rewards, like salaries and stock options and suburban security”, but instead wanted to live exhilarating lives in interesting places, to be challenged and stimulated (Florida, 2003). As is the nature of the new, creative economy, particular jobs would come and go and what really matters are the magnetic ‘qualities of place’.

6.2 Key Challenges

Seeking to use existing assets and develop new ones to attract “creatives,” the Music Row area faces challenges. There are a number of aging structures and vacant or underutilized parcels, especially the parking lot where the Country Music hall of Fame was located. Acceptance of proposals for buildings or activities to occupy this large parking property will be critical to the future use of this central area. Next, zoning issues may present challenges. In 1997, the Metropolitan Historic Zoning Commission (MHZC) adopted a Neighborhood Conservation Zoning Overlay district for the southern portion of Music Row. Any new construction including additions, demolitions, or relocation of structures is reviewed by

the MHZC prior to beginning the project. While the area included in the conservation zoning overlay is a small one, it is an area that contains a high concentration of historic early twentieth century residences and serves as record of the original residential development of Music Row. While the guidelines are criteria and standards used in determining the historical or architectural compatibility of proposed projects, they should also not encumber all potential future use of this district. New structures and buildings should not just imitate past architectural styles; moreover, they should reflect and become adaptable to the era of their own construction.

Zoning regulations can also be burdensome for residents who work from home. The Tennessee Center for Policy Research issued a policy report exposing how Nashville's regulatory environment harms local entrepreneurs and small businesses. It states: "Despite the fact that roughly 13,000 of its residents work from home, Nashville is one of the most unfriendly cities in the nation when it comes to home-based businesses," (Bauer, Lawson and Owen, 2011). Keith Newcomb, a wealth advisor notes, "a homeowner could potentially host hundreds of visitors for a personal party, but not a single visitor for business. He goes on to point out that many great American entrepreneurs, such as Apple's Steve Jobs, would have been unable to get started if they resided in Nashville. Especially in this tough economic climate, paths to entrepreneurship should not be rife with obstacles that prevent earning an honest living," (Bauer, Lawson and Owen, 2011). Therefore, the challenges exist for local leaders to overcome to ensure potential economic success for all entrepreneurs, the home--based business owner, the artist, the street vendor, and the musician alike.

7.0 Planning and Design Principles for Music Row

This section introduces potential design principles to serve as the basis for Music Row design standards. Four key principles are offered to guide new development in Music Row: intensity of use; culture and context; places for people; and sustainability.

7.1 Intensity of Use

In *Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space*, architect Jan Gehl focuses his attention on the affects the physical environment has on the different activities which occur. Gehl separates these activities into three groups: necessary activities, optional activities, and social activities. While necessary activities, such as going to school or work, waiting for the bus and running errands, will occur regardless of exterior environmental conditions, optional activities take place only when environmental conditions are optimal and are especially dependent upon the physical setting. Jane Jacobs also believes diversity of activity is an essential component for a city. She identifies ingredients which promote diversity in the city such as an area must have multiple primary uses which bring a mix of people outdoors, for a variety of reasons, at multiple times of the day.

Florida believes the Creative Class seek out tolerant, diverse and open communities, rich in the kind of amenities that allow them precariously to maintain a work-life balance, together with experiential intensity. He states:

“Uniquely suffering from a relentless ‘time warp’, creatives gravitate towards ‘plug and play’ communities, where social entry barriers are low, where heterogeneity is actively embraced, where loose ties prevail, where there are lots of other creatives to mingle with, where they can ‘validate their identities’ (Florida, 2002).

Continuity in the urban fabric, without cars or large vacant areas interrupting the activities along the sidewalk, is essential to maintaining a quality pedestrian environment. The multiplicity of uses also increases the number of hours of the day that a street is active: office during the day, restaurants and shops into the evening, and residences throughout the day and night. Density, with attention to a mix in building types (new and old, big and small) allows for primary and secondary uses of all kinds, drawing more people, who may be attracted for one reason and willing to stay for another. Jane Jacobs is referring to this type of density when she indicates the need for a “fine grain of uses which is compact and diverse, bringing many types of people to the street at all hours of the day,” (Jacobs, 1961).

7.2 Character and Context:

Gehl also believes attention to cultural context within the physical design will provide individuals and the community with a sense of connection and belonging and give them a personal attachment to the physical place (Gehl, 1987). Attachment to unique or memorable places can be manifested in countless ways: in the architectural details (color, material, texture), in the patterned organization of the spaces (enclosure and exposure, street grids, views), and in the cultural or local symbols which suggests something unique about the community which inhabits the place. According to author Kevin Lynch in *The Image of the City*, one's "environmental image" is comprised of interrelated components two of which include "identity" and "meaning". "Identity" refers to individuality or distinction from other things. "Meaning", Lynch writes, can be practical or emotional, but involves a relationship or connection with place (Lynch, 1960).

One of the risks with new development is that it will all look too similar resulting in homogenous streetscapes which in no way reflect the city, the neighborhood, or the community within which they exist. While a street should reflect a vibrant street life as well as a dense and diverse urban form, it takes on meaning when the culture and community are represented in the details. Participants in Richard Florida's research "equate authentic with being "real," as in a place that has real buildings, real people, real history. An authentic place also offers unique and original experiences," (Florida, 2002). Furthermore, Florida's research reveals music can play a central role in the creation of identity and formation of real communities, in effect providing a sound or "audio identity." Audio identity refers to the identifiable musical genre or sound associated with local bands, clubs and so on that make up a city's music scene," (Florida, 2002). Music Row should capitalize on what has been there throughout its history, music, in order to establish place and provide an increasingly important dimension of individual and authentic identity.

Ensuring character, interest and meaning can be more difficult to regulate in a code. A better understanding of context, including user's personal histories, cultures, histories within the space and an understanding of the space itself is necessary for a complete design of the area. Additionally, it has been

a habit of developers to clear old buildings in order to begin with a ‘clean slate,’ but adaptability implies reuse and working with existing infrastructure to preserve history while advancing and improving the community simultaneously. Change can be more dependent on the buildings’ ability to change occupants, uses, and configuration – for example, converting warehouses into loft apartments. Representing context in the physical design – by providing community spaces, by reacting to environmental and climatic factors, through the use of cultural symbols, and by using sensitivity toward the desire for preservation while still accommodating evolution and change – is what gives a place its unique character and is essential to creating a meaningful place.

7.3 Places for People and Human Scale

While economic analysis and measurement of physical changes of an area are important tools, people are the ultimate focus of place. Peck states,

“Its gist is that we have entered an age of creativity, comprehended as a new and distinctive phase of capitalist development, in which the driving forces of economic development are not simply technological and organizational, but *human*,” (Peck, 2005).

Transportation planners have the job of designing the roadway using standards focused solely on the automobile. Developers and architects increasingly design buildings which focus inward on private spaces and disregard the street. These physical holes in the urban fabric diminish the quality of urban life by reducing the opportunity for social interaction. The community suffers due to traffic congestion, decreased pedestrian accessibility, and a lack of public space in which residents can interact one on one, with local business, and with the community at large.

Florida believes human creativity has become the ‘defining feature of economic life:

“ . . . [It] has come to be valued — and systems have evolved to encourage and harness it — because new technologies, new industries, new wealth and all other good economic things flow from it’ (Florida, 2002).

Emphasize creating spaces on the street which are designed for intimate person-to-person relationships. This necessitates consideration of the ratio of building height to street width. When streets are designed exclusively for cars, pedestrian safety is challenged, buildings are placed well off the street behind parking lots, and blocks become too long. As part of the issue of human scale, density implies uses will be located closer together, which means pedestrians will not have to walk as far to destinations. It is at the human scale that the city has the potential to become a tangible, dynamic and meaningful place. Designing the public realm means providing people a multiplicity of commercial or social interactions. Ultimately, while it has been argued that the automobile, technology (including television, phones, and the internet) and American’s increasingly private lifestyle have made people less dependent upon place, connection with neighbors and public place remains essential to community life, economic networks and civic participation. In *The Essential William H. Whyte*, urbanist William H. Whyte believes as street life grows the area begins to be associated with that activity and people begin to seek it out not simply for the uses themselves but because of the feeling it offers – the excitement of the street and the opportunity to be with and meet people (Whyte, 2000).

7.4 Sustainability

Several people identify urban renewal as placing too much emphasis on achieving economic objectives while sacrificing environmental and social needs. For example, problems such as land use conflicts, traffic congestion, noise pollution or destruction of existing community networks occur, a dissatisfaction of the public due to exclusion of minorities or absence of amenities for public enjoyment can be observed. It is necessary to have effective and sustainable policies to renew a community for the benefit of current and future generations. To facilitate such a sustainable approach, there have been a

number of design considerations offered that meet economic, environmental and social goals that should be simultaneously considered when preparing urban renewal proposals. Strategies, such as green design, pollution control or resource protection, can not only enhance the physical environment but can also play an important role in sustaining social and economic objectives.

These design principles relate the interrelating components of physical space: the street, buildings, open spaces, sidewalks, natural features such as topography, climate and orientation as well as the experiences of each person or their activities including shopping, work, residence, recreation and relaxation and seek to guide the planning and design recommendations in this paper.

8.0 Physical Design Recommendations

In his book *Cities*, Lawrence Halprin writes:

“The ultimate purpose of a city in our time is to provide a creative environment for people to live in...a city which has great diversity and thus allows for freedom of choice; one which generates the maximum of interaction between people and their urban surroundings,” (Halprin, 1972).

This section examines the components of the physical environment of Music Row, that are important for supporting the “creative class.” It will discuss how the qualities of the environment can manipulate the physical space, thus affecting the activity, experience, and image of place. The 2001 Urban Design Overlay was a good step toward significant physical improvements for place-making within Music Row. There were a number of elements addressed in the UDO which contribute to a creative place intended to benefit individuals and the community; however, some deficiencies and a lack of implementation power still remain. The recommendations proposed for Music Row are intended to respond to these remaining key issues and challenges and offer the community something to better engage in, operate within and connect with.

Physical components such as streetscapes, building heights, massing, setbacks, roofs, facades, and materials; parking and access, and signage and canopies, can all be regulated in an effort to ensure future growth and vitality of Music Row. Within this section the following physical components are addressed: streets, buildings, open space, and parking. Although there are other physical components constituting public space, these four factors are the focus for regulating the future direction of development and land use planning.

8.1 Street:

The regulation of an appropriate scaled street network is one of the most critical tools for place-making. Streets are the background to the routine of daily life in the city. They enable movement – whether by vehicles or on foot; they house much of the infrastructure of the city and provide access to home, work, shopping and recreation. The street connects people to their destinations and to each other. In addition to the physical functionality of the street, it has historically played an important role as the arena for human exchange and activities: economic, social and political.

The Music Row neighborhood was well developed by 1908. Before the dominance of the automobile, the pedestrian was the focus street design and its physical form along Music Row. Typical of historic development patterns, the area featured



Figure 5: Image of historic restaurant located within Music Row. Source: <http://www.leainc.com>



Figure 6: Historic Image of Music Row. Source: <http://mbreiding.us>

a grid of streets lined by narrow lots with homes placed relatively close to the street. Rear alleys were also an important feature of the area. The city of Nashville, through the UDO re-configured streets within Music Row.

A key feature was the construction of a roundabout to replace the confusing intersection of Division Street, Music Square East, 16th Avenue South, and 17th Avenue South. The 1997 study also recommended and subsequently constructed streetscape improvements along Demonbreun Street. The continuous façade along Demonbreun Street of retail, restaurants and commercial space was beneficial in defining the pedestrian space along the street. However, other remaining areas along Music Row that still have large distances between them, making them harder to get to and less likely to generate pedestrian traffic and reciprocal business for one another. This lack of connectivity decreases the number of people on the street and thus the appearance of a vital and active street. There large gaps in the urban fabric created by parking lots and other auto-oriented development.

The UDO indicated the objective for the designated that all thoroughfares serve a dual purpose as vehicular and pedestrian corridors, as well as the community's primary public spaces. Currently, a lively level of pedestrian activity is not sustained throughout the day or evening due to the lack of connectivity



Figure 7: Demonbreun Street had many retail and country music themed gift shops. Source: <http://www.leainc.com>



Figure 8: The rotary enhanced traffic movement in the area. Source: <http://mbreiding.us>



Figure 9: View of Demonbreun Street following implementation of the UDO. Source: <http://www.leainc.com>



Figure 10: Large expanses of parking lots have a negative visual impact. Source: Personal Photo

and amenities. In *Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space* Jan Gehl writes:

“In streets and city spaces of poor quality, only the bare minimum of activities takes place. People hurry home. In a good environment, a completely different, broad spectrum of human activities is possible,” (Gehl, 1987).



Figure 11: Currently, Division Street is excessively wide and difficult for pedestrians to traverse. Source: Personal Photo

The opportunity for increased activity and meaningful contact, Gehl asserts, is dependent upon people being on foot, allowing individuals the opportunity to experience place and other people. Jane Jacobs writes that this “sidewalk life” will arise only when “the concrete, tangible facilities it requires are present,” (Jacobs, 1961).

In the case of Music Row, opportunities exist to use the existing short blocks to offer increased access to additional property and greater occasions for different uses. Furthermore, a variety of thoroughfares types could be included and used throughout the area including



Figure 12: A better street network is key to redevelopment of the area. Source: kittlingbooks.com

commercial streets, avenues, and residential roads, each type of thoroughfare being arranged in a very clear interconnected network. The abundant alley system, especially, should be heavily integrated so that certain blocks can be accessed along Music Row.

The street, exemplified by the image of a Michigan city on the right, must also be accommodating to all people: the young, the old and those with disabilities. This accessibility requires ramps, ample crosswalks, and protection from fast moving vehicles and heavy foot traffic. In order to encourage pedestrian traffic the sidewalk must provide separation from vehicular traffic via the use of on street parking, street trees or



Figure 13: Michigan city streets show examples of pedestrian access and provision of public amenities. Source: letssavemichigan.com

sidewalk furniture. The addition of street trees could provide many benefits including; shade and comfort, color and movement, ecological functions, pedestrian separation from cars, and space definition. Attention to detail in design, such as sufficient lighting for sidewalks is important. Details of buildings such as awnings for shelter and visual character or pavers of varying colors and materials can also engage pedestrians in the street scene and provide a sense of comfort is important.

Sidewalk or parking lot space could be used for street vendors, outdoor displays or café seating. These amenities not only increase street life by making the street a more comfortable place to stay, but have an effect on economic vitality as well by keeping people in the area

A complete urban street – a street which is a place – fulfills all the needs of individuals and communities. Above all, streets can serve as a direct reflection of the people, community and culture which exist in a place. For the street to become a place it must not only tell the story of the history and culture of its particular area, but it must communicate its function and be legible to its users. A street with a proliferation of uses and strong economic activity is more likely to encourage a ‘sense of place’ and long term investment in the community.

8.2 Buildings:

The design and placement of buildings is crucial to the vitality of the area. These standards control such things as: the alignment of buildings to the street; how close buildings are to sidewalks; the visibility and accessibility of building entrances; minimum and maximum buildings heights; minimum or maximum lot frontage coverage; façade treatments; the relationship of the buildings to one another; minimum and maximum amounts of window coverage on facades; physical elements required on buildings (e.g. stoops, porches, types of permitted balconies); and the general usage of floors (e.g. office, residential, or retail). While the continuous façade along Demonbreun Street is beneficial, the lack of a second story inhibits the density of people on the street.

Establishing a two-story minimum would, at the very least, increase the density of uses and people. This mix allows for diversity in property values, rents charged and also occupants; whether retail, residential or office. Continuity of engaging ground floor uses such as restaurants, shops and services coupled with office uses above is convenient and efficient for pedestrians. This allows for more entrances and less long breaks or blank walls between activities, and allows for the maximum number of uses in a concentrated space. However, a limited number of very tall buildings should occupy blocks in order to accommodate a fine grain, or mix, of large and small businesses and activities increasing the activity base. William Whyte – founder of The Street Life Project and author of *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* and *City: Rediscovering the Center* stresses that density and diversity of buildings is especially necessary to create a successful place. He outlines several elements of place-making concerning buildings: buildings flush to the sidewalk, stores along the frontage, doors and windows on the street, second story activity (Whyte, 2000). Buildings which are flush with the sidewalk



Figure 14: Image of Mixed-Use, multiple story building that allow for increased density. Source: vanderhoek.us



Figure 15: Mixture of building heights Source: dalypartners.net

contribute to a dense and efficient urban fabric of buildings and uses. Large expanses of blank walls should be avoided so continuity and proximity are not lost and the vitality of that place is not diminished. Windows and doors are important because they engage people walking by giving them increased opportunity for commercial and social interaction.

Many locals and visitors alike know the history of Music Row, but the visual scene does not tell a unified story. While the roundabout sculpture is local art and many historic buildings add architectural flavor, newer corporate buildings and commercial development seems conflict in character. A cohesive building design can help orient people to their location within the district and within the city as a whole. Yet, diversity of buildings should reflect a diversity of uses, architecture, materials, and ownership operating within the community. With the exception of the west side of 17th Avenue South, there is no existing cohesiveness to building design and no established development pattern. Requirements for massing, façade, roofs, and materials should be encouraged. Massing requirements ensure that long, uninterrupted facades along public streets are avoided.

Façade requirements address issues of transparency on the ground level of buildings facing public streets to encourage activity along the street. Public entrances are required along building facades that face public streets. Roof requirements address issues of roof type along public streets. Material requirements address the issue of where changes in material are acceptable, as well as addressing materials that are prohibited or limited in their use or location. Canopies and awnings are encouraged above entrances. The intent of any building signage requirements is to encourage pedestrian-scaled signage.



Figure 16: Sony Music Building
Source: <http://mbreiding.us>



Figure 17: Music Row Recording Studio
Source: <http://mbreiding.us>



Figure 18: Music Row Recording Studio in old home
Source: <http://mbreiding.us>

The lack of building diversity in Music Row area contributes to lower levels of activity. There currently a lack of diversity of buildings types, specifically residential dwellings, in the Music Row area. Previous laws limited the creation of apartments located downtown, in part because of lingering worries the units would become “flophouses.” As a result, there is just recently been a large addition to housing in some of the central business districts. The revitalization and reuse of urban areas could include mixed-use development, filling in the gaps with pedestrian scaled buildings, creating connectivity and a certain level of density and range of activity.



Figure 19: Examples of inclusion of mixed-use development. Source: www.vmwpc.com

8.3 Open Space:

Open space is essential in the urban environment and communal life. Public spaces such as squares and parks of a city give form to the diversity of human exchange. These dynamic spaces are essential counterparts to the more settled places and routines of work and home life, providing the channels for movement, the nodes of communication and personal connection, and the common grounds for play and relaxation. The provision of the sensitive placement of public spaces in relationship to building masses, street furniture, and landscape features is a vital tool in place making. Providing open space for unique events such as public art or street performers allows people to share experiences and engage with one another, encouraging people to stay or return again to an area.



Figure 20: Owen Bradley Park is the only greenspace located within Music Row Source: nashvillescene.com

Owen Bradley Park is one example of open green space within the northern end of Music Row. Owen Bradley was a Nashville Music Producer who produced songs for many great Country Music Artists. Among these individuals were Patsy Cline and Kitty Wells. In 1997, the Metro Parks Authority in Nashville dedicated this small public park between 16th Avenue South and Division Street to Owen



Figure 21: Owen Bradley statue Source: <http://www.flickr.com>

Bradley, where his bronze likeness sits at a bronze piano. While Owen Bradley Park is located right of the Music Row roundabout, there is currently a lack of clear space for designated community gathering in the Music Row area.

The inclusion of more or improved open in the form of plazas, greens, parks, squares and playgrounds could enhance community identity and value. Open spaces can be strategically arranged on streets and alley blocks located in Music Row. The integration formal parks and plazas, but also less



Figure 22: Public Space offering numerous amenities and interest Source: www.pps.com

formal areas of green space available for unstructured recreation could become an opportunity for Music Row to attract and provide access to the outdoors and public gathering spaces for all residents and visitors over time. Similar to street design, certain facilities including lighting, art, trashcans, seating, and shade trees in open space can make the environment more amenable to longer stays in the area. Above all, it is important to think more about these lots as open spaces, as part of the infrastructure of streets and sidewalks, places for various activities that may change and evolve.

8.4 Parking:

At its best, a city uses parking regulation to counter the large impact single occupant vehicles have on a city. For example, some cities do not require developments to have private parking unless it's within a structure or is a residential area. Parking structures can be required to have ground floor uses to maintain activity at the street level. Other cities have established maximum parking requirements and set below peak needs, showing that it is possible to alter zoning codes from the auto-boom days requiring specific ratios of parking spaces per housing unit, or per square foot of retail space. Rules about minimum parking spaces have driven up the costs of apartments for developers and residents, damaged the environment, use up public space and diverted money that could have gone to mass transit and created a government-mandated cityscape that's largely unused. Some cities allow the free market to handle the construction of new parking spaces requiring people who buy or rent new homes pay extra if they want someplace to park a car.

Zoning changes can free up land for commercial or residential development in some cities or even encourage diverse activities such as farmers' markets, street-hockey games and church services to use the space. Moreover, lowering the ratio of parking to dwelling or commercial units or maintaining a scale and form of development that emphasizes sensitivity to the pedestrian environment can go a long way in encouraging the creation of walkable mixed-use, commercial and neighborhood center. Strategically utilizing more on-street parking could also play an important role of in creating a healthy community environment. Some of the main



Figure 23: Parking lot used for local Farmer's Market
Source: theeastsiderla.com



Figure 24: Image of on-street parking Source: walkinginfo.org

benefits of on-street parking include higher efficiency for the user, better land use (using the street for parking can save considerable amounts of land from being used as an off-street surface parking lot), and increased safety (drivers tend to travel at significantly slower speeds in the presence of cars parked on the street). Within Music Row, on-street parking could be maximized and fewer to no required spaces could be specified in the most intensely used areas. The alley structure of Music Row could also serve to increase and better integrate vehicle parking.

The original Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum opened on Music Row (Sixteenth Avenue and Division Street) on April 1, 1967, and closed December 31, 2000. The building was razed and a private parking lot for employees of music licensing firm BMI now occupies the site. There have been several proposed



Figure 25: Image of parking garage integrated into the building landscape. Source: www.archinect.com

uses for this property such as commercial space or residential dwelling units. Careful solutions must be crafted to accommodate additional parking in the area. A parking structure is suggested with a portion of the ground level devoted to retail or service use minimizing pedestrian inactivity along streets. Any parking garage should be set back from the sidewalk and treated with landscaping to enhance the pedestrian experience. Additionally, a parking structure that fronts public streets should be required to have architectural cladding, minimum widths on driveways, and sidewalks that connect to the sidewalk system. Above all, limited access and location of parking areas can serve to de-emphasize the automobile and encourage a more pedestrian friendly environment around Music Row.

Each component discussed above is of the utmost critical importance to establishing proximity to commercial and residential amenities and availability of public places. Highly adaptable development and

efficient use of land and space can maximize social and economic gains by optimizing utility values of land or individual properties as well as accessibility to several different activities or facilities for regular use or consumption. Above all, these recommendations seek to encourage physical components that positively influence the activity, experience, and image of Music Row – turning space into place.

9.0 Leveraging Local Strength through City Connectivity

Local and state governments as well as private organizations are focusing on the quality and ease of connections between different unique spaces within a city. In recent years, several diverse and thriving parts of Nashville have developed surrounding the area of Music Row. Unfortunately, the connectivity to these areas is weakened by the construction of several of the highways. In

Moving Tennessee Forward, Ron Yearwood writes:

“The emergence of three interstates around Nashville’s downtown core brought massive scars to many urban neighborhoods, as the interstate cut through and blocked streets, thus separating neighborhoods,” (Yearwood, 2012)



Figure 26: Map of Midtown and Downtown and division of interstate Source: Michael Payne Personal Image



Figure 27: Physical connections such as improved bridges can encourage more build-out at the edges of areas. Source: Michael Payne personal image

There were a number of physical changes to the street resulting from the implementation of the UDO;

however, there is more desire for

connections to other parts of the city

from and to Music Row. Due to the

diversity of development in Nashville

four sub-districts have been identified to

be better connected to the Music Row

area: The Gulch, Cummins Station, and

Demonbreun Street and the Edgehill

Neighborhood. Music Row, with the

advantage of being close to these distinct “sub-districts” in and unfolding around downtown, should

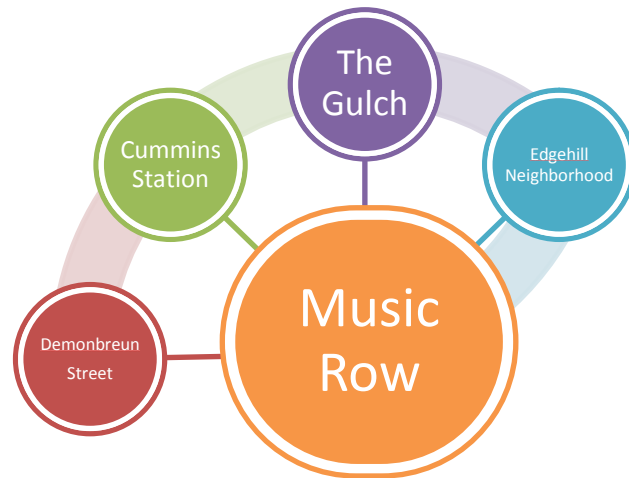


Figure 28: Potential sub-districts to be connected to Music Row Source: Personal Image

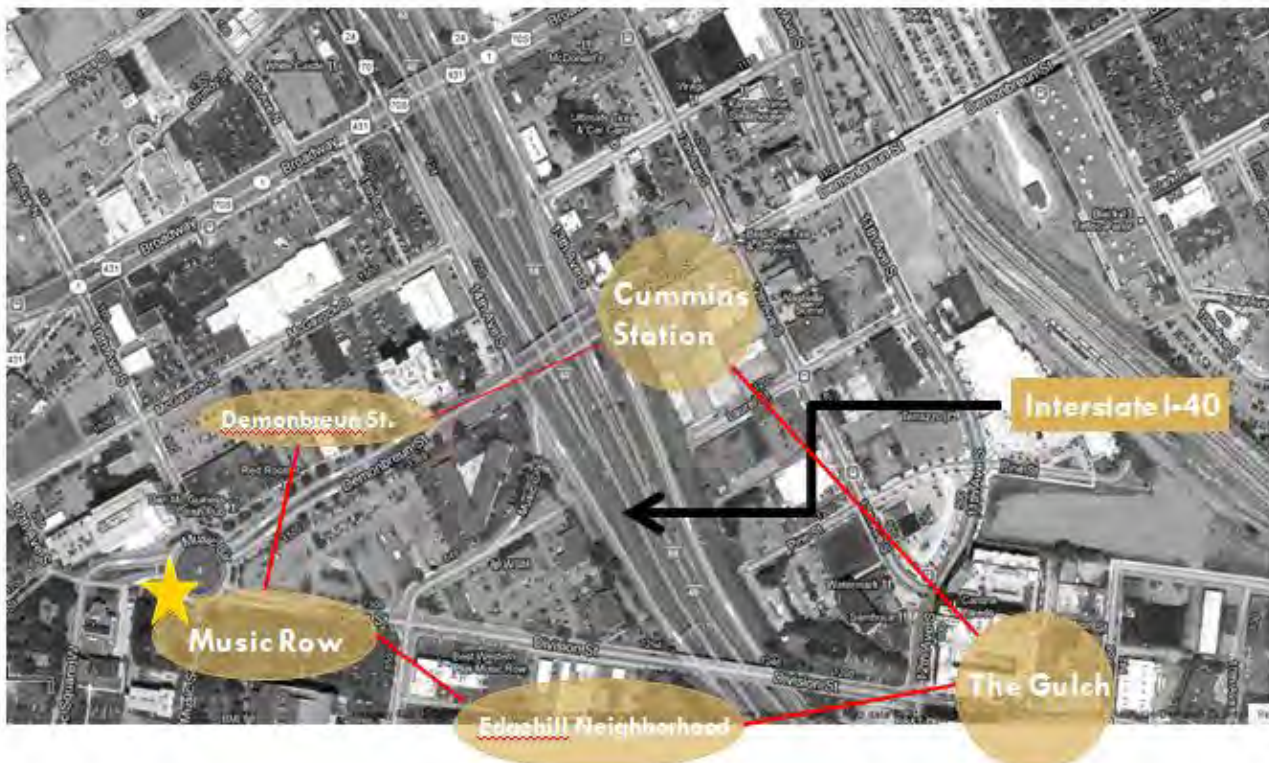


Figure 29: Map of potential sub-districts to be connected to Music Row Source: www.googlemaps.com

capitalize on its prime location.

9.1 Sub-District One- The Gulch

Ten years ago, Nashville entrepreneur and philanthropist Steve Turner and a group of developers began buying land in the Gulch, located south of Downtown Nashville. USA Today writer Larry Copeland described the project:



Figure 30: Image of The Gulch's original location Source: <http://www.usatoday.com>

“The Gulch, as it is known, is now the focus of a \$400 million makeover whose aim is to bring to Music City a trend that planted itself in cities of its size long ago — urban chic,” (Copeland, 2009).

Replacing the parking lots and empty industrial plots, Turner and other investors wanted to create something new for Nashville in the 60-acre spot — a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use, mixed-income project. The development plan emphasized easy access to bus rides, more than 6,000 jobs within a half-mile walk, abundant bike and walking paths as well as few high-rise apartment buildings mixed



Figure 31: Image of The Gulch today Source: <http://www.granthammond.com>

with trendy shops and restaurants. Additionally, the Green Building Council awarded The Gulch a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) award for Neighborhood Development, the first of its kind in the Southeast, for its environmentally sensitive construction.

The residents are mostly locals, many of them “suburbanites” who want a place in town, says Tom Turner, president and CEO of Nashville Downtown Partnership, a group focused on business recruitment and retention, (Copeland, 2009). *USA Today* writer, Larry Copeland states:

“The Gulch will have one-quarter of the housing stock in downtown Nashville, the city says The Gulch is even attracting music label executives and a few members of the NFL Tennessee Titans and the NHL Nashville Predators,” (Copeland, 2009).

Planners of the area ultimately believe that with easy access to arterials and interstates, mass transit, and unique amenities, individuals will choose to locate there instead of common out-of-town destinations springing up. Corporate leaders, alike, believe there is an

increasing willingness to pay for the convenience of being in the urban core. Turner is anticipating being able to provide Class A office space in the area in the near future. His plan seeks to achieve as much “office space as is in the Regions Center, the Pinnacle at Symphony Place and Cummins Station combined,” (Lind, 2011). Ultimately, the addition of office space in the Gulch will create a living and working urban environment that is attractive to so many of today's professionals.



Figure 32: Rendering of proposed office space for The Gulch Source: <http://nashvillecitypaper.com>

9.2 Sub-District Two: Cummins Station

Located on nine acres of land in Nashville's Central Business District and completed in 1907, Cummins Station, and was originally a warehouse for several grocer brands, most famous being Maxwell



Figure 33: Original Cummins Station building Source: <http://www.cumminsstation.com/>

House coffee. Historian Bill Carey wrote:

“Early advertisement of Cummins Station made bold claims about the building designating it ‘the largest reinforced concrete terminal station in the world.’ That statement may have been true at the time but claims that the building was ‘fireproof’, and ‘a place where rats cannot live’ were exaggerated but still testify to the strength of the building. At the time Cummins Station truly ‘symbolized the progressiveness of the South’s modern daughter – Nashville.” (Carey, 2008).

When it was built, Cummins Station connected Nashville’s business community to the railroads and thus, other major cities. The building has since undergone further major renovations, and the structure has been redeveloped with a new vision.



Figure 34: Cummins Station today Source: www.loopnet.com

Today Cummins’s Station is known as a "community of resources." Private companies and a number of business offices as well as banking, retail, gym, dining and live music fill up a large number of the unique spaces.



Figure 35 and Figure 36: Interior Images of Cummins Station
Source: www.tuck-hinton.com

The Cummins Station District has also proven successful in luring creative businesses staffed by young urbanites who are working within buildings other than the actual Cummins Station to frequent and engage in activities and services in the building. Ultimately, the current building owner seeks the building and its uses embrace the future while respecting the integrity of its past.

9.3 Sub-District Three: Demonbreun Street

To the north of Cummins Station is the sub-district of Demonbreun Street. Following implementation of the UDO several streetscape improvements were made to enhance this segment of the street. As mentioned previously, the roundabout simplified the confusing intersection at Division Street, Music Square East, 16th Avenue South, and 17th Avenue South in 2001. Its design also provided a focal point for the area. The center of the roundabout is occupied by the sculpture “Musica” which stands at 38 feet tall and depicts nine nude dancing figures representing musical muses.



Figure 37: Statue “Musica” in Music Circle Source: southnashvillelife.com

Other streetscape improvements included the construction of a landscaped median and sidewalks on Demonbreun Avenue and Division Street, as well as on street parking and wider sidewalks along Demonbreun. New restaurants and shops built on the north side of Demonbreun, has filled in the urban fabric and increase business density.



Figure 38: The old location of the Country Music Hall of Fame is now a parking lot Source: Personal Photo

While several buildings have been demolished including the old Country Music Hall of Fame, several projects are currently being proposed for the area. There is substantial potential value in these proposed projects since they will be located within a stroll of the half - billion-dollar-plus convention center, residential

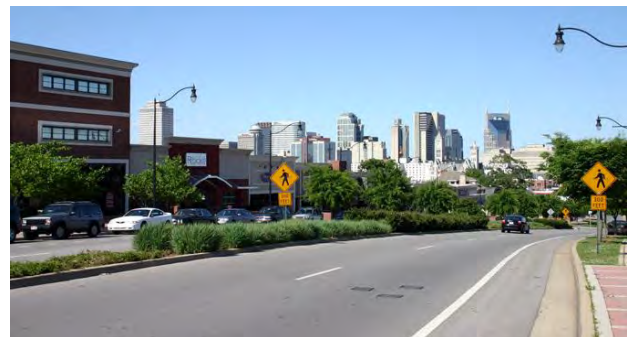


Figure 39: View on Demonbreun Street looking towards downtown Source: www. city-data.com

living space surrounding the area of Cummins Station and the Gulch community and the heart of Nashville's historic arts district, adjacent to the Frist Center for the Visual Arts and the Schermerhorn Symphony Center.

9.4 Sub-District Four: Edgehill Neighborhood

The Edgehill neighborhood has grown as a community of aspiring working-class and predominantly African American families. Throughout the early years, commercial and retail spaces such as hardware stores, bakeries, meat markets, drug stores, and large-scale grocery stores lined the neighborhood streets.

“The arrival of a streetcar line to Edgehill around 1890 made the neighborhood more attractive to downtown professionals. White commuters began to settle along 8th and 9th Avenues on the eastern border of the neighborhood and along 15th Avenue to the west. Before long, the Great Migration brought a flood of rural black migrants into Nashville as they sought work in the city or stopped there on the way north. The large growth in Nashville's African American population coincided with the rise in popularity of the automobile. Many of Nashville's white residents moved to new suburban areas further from downtown, segregating the once-integrated inner city neighborhoods,” (Civic Design Center, 2009).



Figure 40: Original Image of Edgehill Source: <http://www.edgehillvillage.com>

In the 1950s, Edgehill remained culturally and economically vibrant. However, by the 1960s powerful external forces changed the character of Edgehill. The Owen Bradley's recording studio moved

to 16th Avenue South on the border of west Edgehill that led to a large-scale migration of record companies. As record companies rushed to purchase residential houses, the city was happy to accommodate with zoning changes, and as a result Edgehill's urban fabric changed drastically. In addition, the philosophy of urban renewal justified downtown interstate highway expansion. With the construction of I-65 and I-40, the northern and eastern boundaries of the neighborhood were truncated. Direct connections to downtown and Fort Negley were limited to two bridges that focused mainly on automobile traffic and isolated areas which later attracted crime.

Urban renewal foreshadowed the next decade's calamitous interventions forced upon the neighborhood's structure. Homes were razed and neighborhood streets erased to make way for new "superblock" subdivisions and commercial property on 12th Avenue was virtually eliminated when the street was expanded to five lanes. Businesses in Edgehill all but disappeared, and residents were left with one grocery store where, at one time, there were fifteen.

Redevelopment in the Edgehill neighborhood should incorporate the principles of inclusive design. Inclusive design creates an environment where everyone can access and benefit from the full range of opportunities available to members of society.

It aims to remove barriers that create undue effort, separation or special treatment, and

enables everyone to participate equally in mainstream activities independently, with choice and dignity.

Edgehill's neighbors are currently receiving street improvements, which include new sidewalks, planting strips, streetlights, street furniture and landscaping. When completed, these neighborhoods will have a pedestrian friendly environment. However, these new centers will be separated by the Edgehill



Figure 41: Public Housing in Edgehill Source: <http://www.nashville-mdha.org>

neighborhood, which is harshly divided by its main thoroughfare. With similar street improvements, Edgehill could also become a pedestrian friendly neighborhood.

Today, neighborhood organizations and citizen mobilization has brought about new hope and visions for the future of Edgehill. Edgehill residents seek to establish and maintain an identity and character as a strong, diverse, and viable neighborhood within the community, and strengthen its relevance to the surrounding neighborhoods and the city at large. Edgehill Village, a set of eight buildings that were originally the 1920's Whiteway Cleaners & Laundry, has been developed utilizing original buildings in innovative new ways or refurbished and used for their original purpose. The Urban Land Institute made the following statement regarding Edgehill Village:

“It’s an urban village with shops, restaurants, loft apts. and work spaces; it reinvests in the neighborhood and offers economic development opportunities to the neighborhood. Having both sides of the street developed and incorporating natural grasses and sidewalks creates a true neighborhood scale, a pedestrian-friendly sense of community,” (ULI, 2009).



Figure 42: Image of Edgehill Village Source: [www. irunforfoodandwine.com](http://www.irunforfoodandwine.com)

The development’s off-beat feel could be further bolstered by a combination of a studio artist space and teaching facility for artists. Nashville Business Journal writer Eric Synder writes:

“It would be a studio space, not for musicians, but for the quiet arts,” Asbury said, adding that the studio space would be some 1,600 square feet, while an additional 1,000 square feet would be set aside for a teaching studio,” (Synder, 2009).

9.5 Opportunities for Connectivity among Music Row and Sub-Districts

It is vital to have convenient, effective and safe pedestrian walkways and transportation networks within these parts of the community. It is widely recognized that connectivity contributes to the vibrancy of the property market and economic prosperity because the values of land and buildings along those routes are much higher than those away from them. Areas that are easily accessible become attractive investments for businesses, as transportation costs for production and delivery of goods and services can be greatly reduced. Citizens also seek higher mobility, as the time and cost of commuting from home to job and neighborhood can be saved for additional production and consumption.

Opportunities abound to forge connections that can help enrich the Music Row area with each of the identified sub-districts. Many of these opportunities exist at two of the bridges that cross over the interstate highways, specifically the Demonbreun Street Bridge and the Division Street Bridge. The interaction of infrastructure and functionality has become the focus when considering



Figure 43: Example of multi-modal transportation network Source: [www. planphilly.com](http://www.planphilly.com)



Figure 44: Division Street Bridge Source: Personal Photo

enhancements and repairs to connections throughout cities. Ron Yearwood writes, “Many cities around the world are looking at these abundant overpasses as opportunities for creating visually-pleasing, interactive public places,” (Yearwood, 2012).

In 2010, Mayor Karl Dean signed an executive order to create “Complete Streets” for new construction or enhancements to roadway projects. With an aging infrastructure system in need of repairs, “future enhancements can incorporate many components that create a “Complete Street” bridge-inviting and accessible to all user types,” (Yearwood, 2012). The Mayor’s policies could be transferred to bridge projects, where users of all types are included in the design and implementation of new and enhanced bridges. Pedestrian bridges that are constructed across interstate highways are a means to keep a physical



Figure 45: Demonbreun Street Bridge Source: Personal Photo



Figure 46: Division Street today Source: Personal Photo



Figure 47: Pedestrian friendly environment
Source: [www. economicsofplace.com](http://www.economicsofplace.com)

connection between neighborhoods.

Important components of these connections should appear bike lanes, wide and well maintained sidewalks serving buffers between vehicular traffic and foot traffic. Landscaping elements or installed lighting can also be used as buffers, meanwhile enhancing its aesthetics and experimental quality. Public art can be used as a tool when conceptualizing these transformations, enhancing and highlighting existing structural details, and converting bare concrete walls into focal points. New concepts for aesthetic enhancements can also create a sense of community participation and ownership of a unique structure and asset to the neighborhood. All these efforts on both bridges could add to the effect of creating a cohesive, aesthetically pleasing environment of consistent design characteristic and allow multiple modes of travel across these corridors. Above all, these improvements could better link these “sub-districts” creating new synergies while simultaneously establishing a distinct neighborhood identity for each.



Figure 48: Current Demonbreun Street Bridge Source: www.civicdesigncenter.org



Figure 49: Potential Demonbreun Street Bridge Source: www.civicdesigncenter.org



Figure 50: Image of enhanced shared roadway bridge Source: portlandart.net

10.0 Current Local Policy Support

Nashville local leaders and government already has many policies in place involving transportation, sustainability and livability for everyone in the city. The goals of the recommendations offered in this paper seek to work within the guiding principles and objectives identified in each of the following plans: Nashville's Metropolitan Planning Organization 2035 Transportation Plan, Nashville's Open Space Master Plan and Green Infrastructure Master Plan and the update of the 2040 General Plan.

Nashville's MPO's new Regional Transportation Plan establishes goals for the enhancement of Middle Tennessee's transportation system over the next 25 years. It includes strategies to support the economic growth and prosperity goals of the region's communities, while dealing with the problems of future congestion, concerns for the environment, and the safety and security of travelers. New commercial and residential centers ultimately, promote different modes of transportation. Adequate, safe, effective public transportation is a necessary component of any city with a thriving economy. Employing an interconnected transit system and increasing accessibility helps residents to conserve time and gas as well; therefore, the East-West Connector, or bus rapid transit (BRT), has been proposed for the city. Director of the non-profit Nashville Transit Alliance, Ed Cole, states, "With rising energy cost and further increasing congestion on the interstates, the future predicts a rise in demand for urban living. As history shows, it is likely that downtown will tend to expand along its main east and west corridor," (Cole, 2012). This project is considered by many to be critical if Nashville wants to avoid the dramatic increases in traffic congestion that will arise as its population continues to grow. Furthermore, the East-West corridor consists of important employment, cultural, educational and residential areas.

Nashville's first comprehensive Open Space Master Plan calls for the preservation of 22,000 acres of public and private land over the next 25 years. The plan represents the culmination of a year-long process including public meetings and input from hundreds of citizens and organizations. In addition, Nashville's Green Infrastructure Master Plan analyzed the benefits that widespread green

infrastructure implementation could achieve in the city's combined sewer system area; identified potential projects the city can implement; and suggested incentives that Nashville can offer to private properties to install green infrastructure, such as stormwater fee discounts, rebates, installation financing, and awards and recognition programs. The city also developed a fairly robust public engagement initiative consisting of online resources and high-profile demonstration projects, and it has a stormwater user fee based on impervious surface area, with credit available for on-site mitigation.

Finally, the Nashville 2040 General Plan will clearly define the values, vision and goals, and a framework for the city to achieve them. Mayor Karl Dean today announced that the Nashville General Plan, which was developed in 1992 as *Concept 2010*, will be updated to create a 25-year vision for Nashville's growth and development. The General Plan will include community input the goal of developing a citywide vision to support economic development; expand education, housing and employment opportunities for residents; expand the application of environmentally sound and sustainable development practices; and increase neighborhood livability.

11.0 Conclusion

Architect Norman Foster argues that "the thing that attracts us to the city is the chance encounter, the knowledge that you'll be able to start here, end up here and go back there, but that something unexpected will happen along the way, that you'll make a discovery," (Urbanized, 2011). Cities are exciting and enticing place to be. The challenges of balancing housing, mobility, public space, civic engagement, economic development and environmental policy are fast becoming universal concerns among cities. In the creative economy, regional advantage comes to those cities that can attract and quickly mobilize the talent, assets, and capabilities for innovations and new business ideas. To attract this talent it is important for local leaders to make investments in certain areas of the city to enhance quality-of-life by supporting increased opportunities for education, jobs, recreation, and civic involvement and mixed-use or affordable housing. Strong regional economic well-being can also be supported through

transportation solutions that reduce the cost of living and doing business, increase access to education, jobs and amenities. Further support of new growth and prosperity should not be at the sacrifice of natural, social, or financial resources of future generations. Both the conservation of the built environment, (in terms of preserving cultural heritage and insuring the efficient use of land and building materials), and good design (which is acknowledged as contributing to people's quality of life) are seen as integral components of sustainable development.

In short, civic leaders and municipal planners should be dedicated to helping local communities realize the full potential of creative ideas by encouraging the following design principles: intensity of use; culture and context; places for people; and sustainability. Building new systems of connectivity within the local community can also enable local residents and employees to live and work with ease and convenience. By exploring a diverse range of these urban design strategies, support for new ways of adapting to the challenges facing Nashville and Music Row can be realized. Recognizing the multitude of needs and variety of perspectives and backgrounds among Nashville's citizenry is essential to any investments in the development of the Music Row area. Florida states, "We must harness all of our intelligence, our energy and most important our awareness. The task of building a truly creative society is not a game of solitaire. This game, we play as a team," (Florida, 2003). Above all, these design principles recommended in this paper seek to assert a commitment to quality of place.

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Leveraging the ‘Creative Class’ for Local Economic Development: Nashville’s Music Row and Beyond

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